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file

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OILS FOR ARMING AMERICA

With the United States facing the possibility of a fats and oils shortage, farmers are seeding a record-breaking crop of oil-bearing plants this year -- at least $12\frac{1}{2}$ million more acres of soybeans, peanuts, and flax than the annual average for the 10 years preceding the war, an additional acreage larger than the States of Maryland, Connecticut, Delaware, and Rhode Island combined.

Before the end of 1942, we may find ourselves short of the vegetable fats and oils necessary to grease our war machine, keep the population healthy, and take care of vital needs of our allies. By making the heaviest plantings and harvestings of peanuts, soybeans, and flax in our history, and stepping up production of cottonseed, the U. S. farmer will be able to pour millions of gallons of oil into the Nation's emptying supply tanks at a time when it is vitally needed.

Pacific Imports Cut Off

In the days before we entered the war, the U. S. received a constant flow of vegetable oils from the Far East -- coconut from the Philippines, palm from the East Indies and Malaya, perilla from Manchuria and Japan, and tung from China. When the Japs descended on the Southern Pacific, they threw a monkey wrench into this vital vegetable oil supply line and suddenly shut off more than half of all our imports. At the same time, America's industries, thrown into high gear for war, were needing ever greater quantities of fats and oils. The demand now is unprecedented.

1942 Goals for U. S. Fats and Oils Crops

To help prevent a threatening shortage of fats and oils, acreage goals were set up for the planting of oil-producing crops on U. S. farms in 1942. If these goals are fully planted and growing conditions are favorable, we will have a domestic production of one and a quarter billion more pounds of vegetable fats and oils for the 1942-43 crop year than for the 1941-42 crop year. We will have ten times as much peanut oil as in the current marketing season, over 40 percent more soybean oil, one-fifth more linseed oil, and one-sixth more cottonseed oil than in 1941-42.

Figures on the expected step-up in oil production, assuming full attainment of acreage goals, have been estimated as follows:

Oils	Estimated	Estimated	Increase (pounds)
	1942-43 Production (pounds)	1941-42 Production (pounds)	
Peanut	700,000,000	70,000,000	630,000,000
Soybean	1,100,000,000	765,000,000	335,000,000
Linseed	600,000,000	500,000,000	100,000,000
Cottonseed	1,460,000,000	1,250,000,000	210,000,000
Total	3,860,000,000	2,585,000,000	1,275,000,000

An increase of almost 1,000 percent in the acreage of peanuts for oil is called for by the 1942 farm production goals, boosting total peanut acreage 155 percent. A soybean acreage 54 percent larger and a flax acreage 34 percent larger than last year is needed.

This year's acreage goals, compared with last year's acreages, are as follows:

	<u>1942 Goals</u> (acres)	<u>1941 Harvest</u> (acres)	<u>Increase</u> (percent)
Peanuts:			
For oil -	3,391,000	354,000 <u>1/</u>	958
For all purposes -	5,000,000	1,964,000	155
Soybeans (for beans) -	9,000,000	5,855,000	54
Flaxseed -	4,500,000 <u>2/</u>	3,367,000 <u>2/</u>	34

1/ Computed. Harvested acreage minus acreage allotment. 2/ Seeded.

Cotton farmers have been asked to plant up to their full AAA acreage allotments for cotton. Last year's national cotton acreage allotment was under-planted by 4 million acres. If the full allotment is planted this year about 1,460 million pounds of cottonseed oil will be provided, compared with only about 1,250 million pounds in 1941-42.

Oils -- A Lethal Weapon and a Vital Food

Vegetable oils crushed from seed crops grown on U. S. farms are used in making nitro-glycerine explosives, paint, varnish, anti-freeze, soap, medicine, metal and leather goods, and textiles. They lubricate high-speed motors and metal lathes turning on the assembly line. They feed the soldier, the sailor, the marine, and civilians behind the lines working longer hours under increasing strain in the battle for freedom.

Almost all the linseed oil used in this country goes into paints, varnishes, linoleum, and oilcloth. Linseed oil, made from flaxseed, is the principal drying oil used by our paint and varnish industry and a highly strategic war material because it is needed for painting ships, planes, guns, tanks, and cantonments. Extra linseed oil will make up for lost imports of tung, perilla and other drying oils from the Far East.

Normally, most of our soybean, peanut, and cottonseed oil goes into food products -- oleomargarine, shortening, cooking oils, and salad dressing. However, due to the great interchangeability of oils, these domestic oils can be substituted for coconut and palm oil in making soap, glycerine, and lubricants, and for imported drying oils in making paint, varnish, and other industrial products. Such utilization of soybean oil increased 40% last year. Greater use of domestic oils in food products also makes up for lost imports because it releases our remaining stocks of imported oil for technical uses in vital war industries.

War Stockpiles Essential

Vegetable oil production in the United States reached a new high last year, but demand also broke all records. It is estimated that the use of fats and oils for industrial purposes was 30% greater in 1941 than in 1940, and the use for food purposes 4% greater.

U. S. requirements for this year will top last year's needs by almost a billion pounds, it is anticipated. We will have to make shipments to our allies, who have lost their sources of fat and oil supply, as well as take care of ourselves. This year's constantly rising demand is being met by dipping into our reserve supplies. Factory stockpiles must be maintained at all costs. We cannot afford to be caught short in wartime.

The estimated U. S. production of 10.3 billion pounds of fats and oils for the calendar year 1942 is a billion pounds higher than U. S. production in 1941. Increase in butterfat production, additional hog slaughterings, and closer trimmings of hog fat in packing plants, and salvaging of waste kitchen grease by the Army and possibly by civilians will help in enlarging our fat and oil supplies, but increases in oil-bearing crops will be by far the most important factor. We will continue getting imports of flaxseed and other oil-bearing seeds from South America, but the fact that shipping space is at a premium will hold these imports to low levels.

Prospective Plantings as of March 1

The March 1 Prospective Plantings Report of the Federal Crop Reporting Board shows that at that time farmer's intentions to plant both peanuts and flax were short of the goals for these two crops. This was in part offset by the fine report on soybeans. If 4 million acres of soybeans are grown for hay this year, as was the case last year, about 10 million acres will be harvested for beans. The goal for this year is 9 million acres.

Farmers were expecting to plant only 66 percent more peanut acreage than in 1941, however, while an increase of 155 percent is considered vital. An increase of only 20 percent in flaxseed plantings was indicated, compared with the 34 percent increase needed. However, it is believed that larger plantings than were anticipated have been and will be made as farmers realize more acutely the seriousness of the shortage.

The following shows how farmers' March intentions to plant compare with 1941 plantings and 1942 goals:

<u>1941 Planted Acreage</u>	<u>1942 Acreage Goals</u>	<u>1942 Intentions to plant</u>
Peanuts 1/	2,498,000	5,000,000 (harvested)
Soybeans 2/	5,996,000	9,000,000 (harvested)
Flaxseed	3,367,000	4,500,000

1/ Grown alone for all purposes. Partly duplicated in hay acreage.

2/ Four million acres for hay deducted from total plantings.

Good Prices Assured

Oiling the Nation's war machine will prove profitable as well as patriotic for the farmer. Prices of vital oil crops will be supported at above 85 percent of a price comparable to parity as of the beginning of the marketing year.

In no event will average prices received by farmers be allowed to go below the following minimums: Peanuts: No. 1 White Spanish, \$82.00 per ton; No. 1 Runners, \$78.00 per ton; Class A Virginia, \$70.00 per ton. Soybeans: U. S. No. 2 Yellow (of recognized varieties of high oil content), \$1.60 per bushel. Flaxseed: \$2.20 per bushel. There will of course be grade and geographical differentials.

Conservation Essential

Because of the urgent need for expanding acreages of vegetable oil crops, many farmers will be growing peanuts, soybeans, flax, and other crops for the first time. Some of these oil-bearing plants will be raised on land which is not safe for continuous cropping without special conservation measures. A careful study of production methods and special attention to soil protection will therefore be essential. Great care should be given to the selection of high oil content seed and to proper methods of cultivation. It is important that every producer of oil crops obtain the best yields possible by contour cultivation, fertilization, crop rotation, and other conservation practices.

Information on growing these vital crops may be obtained through USDA War Board members, State experiment stations, or the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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